



REMARKS

Minister of Transport
The Hon. Wayne Furbert, JP MP

Opening of Road Safety Week
15 May 2023

Good afternoon,

This week the Bermuda Road Safety Council (BRSC) will focus public education efforts on improving requirements to ensure safer roads for everyone.

The theme this year is ***Changing Minds, Changing Behaviors***. It is an appropriate message for all who travel on Bermuda's roads. Changing how we view road safety and how we act while riding, driving or walking is a call to action for every resident. The time has come to change how we conduct ourselves on the roads.

Before I go any further, I would like to express my sincere condolences to all the mothers, fathers and families that have lost a loved-one due to a road fatality. No words can undo the anguish you have experienced, and I am sure there is nothing that can adequately alleviate the pain you feel.

For our mothers, as we reflect upon Mother's Day just passing, a day meant to honor and celebrate the immeasurable love and sacrifice you have poured into your children's lives, I am painfully aware that this year's event has been marred by an unspeakable tragedy. Words cannot express the depth of my sorrow and remorse for the loss you have suffered—the loss of your precious children to Bermuda roads.

Bermuda....I implore you that it is time to shift behaviors!!!
Shockingly, last year, there were 1,218 reported by-type for road collisions.
11 were fatal,
109 were serious injury,

517 were slight injury collisions, and 581 resulted in collision damages.

Additionally, over the past 5 years the statistics indicate the following as it relates to fatalities and serious injuries on our roads:

YEAR	Serious Injuries	Fatalities
2018	92	12
2019	113	9
2020	87	7
2021	106	17
2022	109	11

Thus far, in 2023, there have been approximately 457 collisions, with 40 serious injuries and 5 fatalities.

We should be alarmed by these statistics. In the past five years, collision numbers have been consistent. Regrettably, the stats have not provoked some individuals' mindsets or a shift in behavior.

Speeding is one of the leading causes of collisions in Bermuda. Speeding alone is dangerous, but when coupled with driving under the influence, driving without care and attention, or using a device, the chances of a collision are multiplied.

Just last month, in their report, the Bermuda Police Service reported on Operation Vega; the BPS noted that while enforcement has a role to play in helping to reduce harm on our roads, every road user has a responsibility to ensure their safety and the safety of others, in their daily travels around the island.

Unfortunately, the Road Safety Council nor the Bermuda Police Service can stop an individual from speeding, overtaking and, worse, driving while intoxicated. With the high rate of accidents involving motorcyclists in Bermuda, the BRSC has implored motorcyclists to slow down, avoid the third lane, take extra caution when overtaking and always use caution when approaching pedestrians.

As the Ministry responsible for overseeing Project Ride, the Transport Control Department will introduce new regulations better to prepare our young people for safe road travel. The Ministry's Throne Speech commitment is to amend the Auxiliary Bicycles Act 1954 to create a learner's permit and to provide for on-road instructions and examinations for those wanting to attain a motor bike license. We are committed to

enhance the preparation for new and young riders for the road to promote safety, reduce accidents, and cultivate responsible motorcyclists, who will ultimately become drivers.

The BRCS are evaluating various mechanism to address our road safety challenges including but not limited to:

- Reviewing penalties for traffic offences,
- Introducing safety measurements for the use of electric bicycles,
- Assessing the use of stop light cameras.

Bermuda, it is time we recognize the critical importance of responsible behavior on the roads in Bermuda. Your safety is paramount, and it is incumbent upon each and every one of us to uphold our duty as responsible drivers and riders. By adhering to traffic rules, practicing patience, and demonstrating courtesy, we can create a culture of safety and respect on our roads. Let us remember that every action we take on the roads has the potential to save lives and prevent unnecessary harm. Together, let us commit to being responsible road users, ensuring that Bermuda remains a haven of safety and harmony for all.

In closing, I wish to thank the Bermuda Road Safety Council, led by Chairman Dennis Lister III and Deputy Chairman Wayne Swan, for their diligence and dedication. We appreciate your work to raise awareness and promote projects such as the Designated Driver Campaign and transportation planning support for event organizers. I encourage you and your team to stay the course.

Thank you.